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PENCE CALLS ON FDA TO SUSPEND APPROVAL OF RU-486

Death of California Teenager Shows Danger of Abortion Pill, Congressman Says

Washington, Nov 4, 2003 - Washington, D.C.—Congressman Mike Pence today called on Congress to immediately pass legislation he is cosponsoring that suspends FDA approval of the “abortion pill” known as RU-486. Holly Patterson, a California teenager, died last month after taking the drug.

“I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of this young American caused by a medication that should not be available to the American public,” said Pence. “As evidenced by this tragedy, RU-486 is a dangerous drug that should never be administered, let alone under the weak oversight of current FDA regulations.”

Patterson, seeking to end an unwanted pregnancy, was given RU-486 when she visited a Planned Parenthood clinic in September. Within four days she entered a hospital emergency room complaining of severe pain and bleeding and three days later she returned vomiting and in great pain. She died that afternoon.

The ban on RU-486 was overturned by the FDA under President Clinton’s direction in 1993. RU-486 consists of two pills. The first starves the baby to death and the second expels it from the mother’s body. The second pill, Misoprostol is actually an ulcer drug that the manufacturer has warned should not be used in pregnancy-related conditions.

The bill cosponsored by Pence-“The RU-486 Suspension and Review Act of 2003”-would

immediately suspend FDA's approval of RU-486 and direct the General Accounting Office to conduct an independent review of the approval process FDA used to declare RU-486 "safe and effective."

"Congress should move swiftly to protect the public from this medicinal hazard by, at a minimum, greatly restricting the professional circumstances under which it may be prescribed," said Pence.

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